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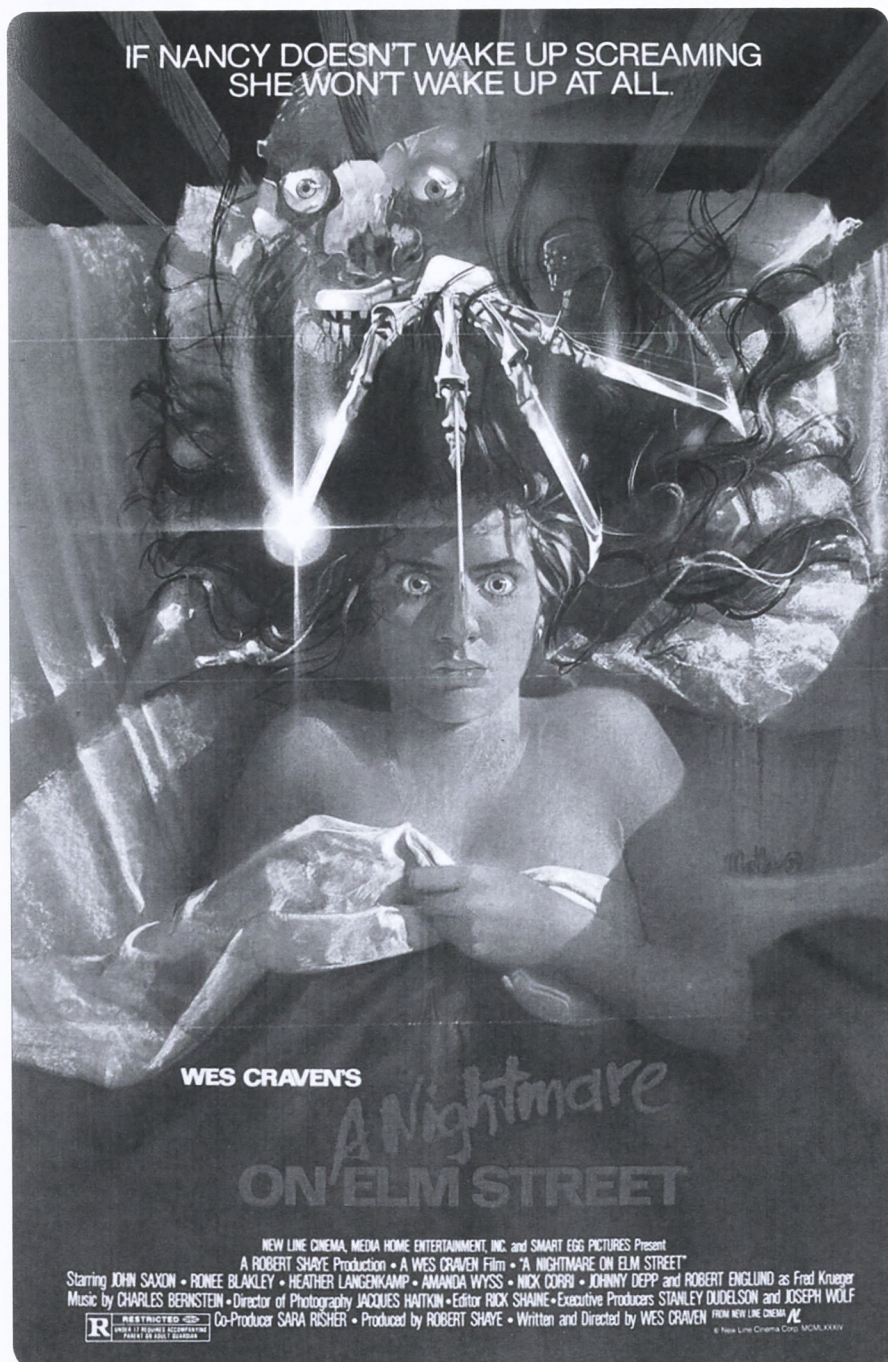
the SEMI

SPRING 9 • MAY 24, 2010

CONNECTING THE CAMPUS • CREATING DIALOGUE

The Devil Came Down to Elm Street: A Theology of Evil As Developed By Wes Craven

REFLECTION BY JASON GRASL



I was eight when the original *A Nightmare On Elm Street* came out. As any good parent should, mine tried to keep me from watching it and any other horror movies of that ilk.

In the meantime, I heard about the movie, its sequels and their main character, Freddy, from friends at school. As an eleven year-old, the gory special effects and imaginative deaths sounded absolutely titillating. By the time *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare* came out in 1991, I saw it at the theater (as I recall, it was one of the first R-rated films I snuck into before I was 17) and thought it seemed odd that Freddy had become comical, with punny-one-liners to go along with the over-the-top deaths that kept getting more outrageous as the series went along (Freddy as a motorcycle, Freddy in a video game).

That's both funny and campy, but it's not what Wes Craven created in the original. We saw evidence of that when he returned to the series ten years and six movies later, writing and directing *Wes Craven's New Nightmare*. Craven, playing himself in the *New Nightmare*, admits as much, saying Fred Krueger (not the much more chummy "Freddy") is the manifestation of an age-old evil, not to

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I did not really question the presence of television in my life for my first several years as an adult.

My desire to be a healthy and productive member of society combined with my general lack of interest in sitcoms limited both the time and programmatic diversity of the television I watched, but it gave me a pretty consistent routine: *Sportscenter* once or twice per week, *Jeopardy!* once or twice per week, and sporting events that interested me. I didn't like the fact that I watched as much as I did, but I did anyways.

Then I got married.

We had cable for the first few months of our marriage, but we soon decided that it was an expense that we could live without. And thus, for the first time in my adult life I did not have cable television readily available to me.

It was great.

To be honest, it is hard to imagine that we will ever pay for cable again. I love the freedom of not having 'watching television' as an option when I have down time (maybe that says more about my self-discipline, or lack thereof, than anything else). When we moved to Pasadena last year, we didn't even consider getting cable.

In the interests of full disclosure, I will admit that we do watch television with friends occasionally, and I sometimes watch shows or games on my laptop. I also confess that my wife and I had a television in our hotel room on vacation last week, and loved closing the day with *The Daily Show*. But television is a smaller part of my life than it ever has been, and virtually all television watching I do takes place in community. I read more books, I exercise more, I spend more time in conversation, and I care less about things that don't matter (though there is still room for improvement). In short, I don't miss television.

I have friends who think that's crazy, and other friends who think my television -loving friends are slothful. I'm not especially interested in moralizing television abstinence, but I will say it has made a wonderful difference in my own life, and is, for me, a small step in living a life that is a bit more productive, a bit less self-centered, and a bit more interesting. **S**

-Brian Kiley
SEMI Editor



the SEMI

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Letters to the Editor: The SEMI welcomes brief responses to articles and commentaries on issues relevant to the Fuller community. All submissions must include the author's name and contact information and are subject to editing.

Announcements: Notices may be submitted to semi-production@fuller.edu or dropped off at the SEMI Office on the 2nd floor of Kreyssler Hall above the Catalyst. They must be submitted by the deadlines printed below and not exceed 35 words.

Advertisements: Notices for events not directly sponsored by a Fuller department, office, or organization will be printed in the "Services" section and charged per word. All requests should be made through the Ads Coordinator.

Ads Submission

Summer 1
Summer 2

Deadline

July 1
August 1

We are quitting... I mean,

The SEMI is Hiring.

Go to Fuller HR website for job descriptions.
Contact Carmen at sls-director@fuller.edu if interested!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Student Awards Convocation

Student Awards Convocation

All of the Fuller
community
is invited!



10-11 a.m. Thursday, May 27, 2010
First Congregational Church

Call 584.5212 or email prov-acadsystems@fuller.edu for more information.

TV or not TV, That is the Question

By JEN PRICKETT

I can remember an episode of *The West Wing* about the death penalty that moved me to reflection and contemplation like few kinds of media ever have. And I can remember an episode of *Dexter* I wish I hadn't watched. So from this I ask, "TV or not TV?"

First, a word about my context. For the past year and a half, I have been living in an intentional Christian community. The ten of us come from (primarily) suburban Christian homes where the parenting we received was cautious of the media we took in. As we got older and our faith progressed, few of us had moral con-

habits and live more connected to one another. So a natural movement was to eliminate cable television. Two members of our house already had a nice television, so we kept that and made the decision to use it for watching the occasional movie or show on DVD.

What this has meant for our group

or *How I Met Your Mother* on DVD. But, in general, the television is not on. I think we're all thankful that that is the television's default position.

Some of us would love to see our media eliminated entirely, but we try to make decisions by consensus and move as the group is ready. As individuals have felt more convicted by how much time they spend watching television, watching movies, and playing video games, the group supported them in what they believed the Spirit was leading them into, whether it was a seasonal fast or a permanent elimination. We constantly have to fight judgmental attitudes and I believe we're all working to support each other in the convictions God is moving each of us towards individually without the need to criticize ourselves if we don't have that same conviction.

When it comes to the morality of different shows, there have been a few instances when someone was struggling with what we were watching, and asked to turn it off. Everyone has always responded well and the discussions we have had as a result of these issues have been fruitful. All of us want to fight consuming any sort of media without filtering out the good from the bad. Personally, I have been working to take in less normative violence in any form of media.

The process of deciding what is and is not appropriate for each of us personally has been aided by the presence of the community. We refuse to let television become too central in our life together or become an addictive behavior, but we recognize

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straints against much of anything on television and some of us even lived in housing situations where the television was on almost all of the time. This background influenced our communal discussions about having a television and watching it. Now, granted, it wasn't a lengthy discussion in our community (at least when compared to, say, conversations about the nature of our prayer life together or the dishes rotation), but it was a consideration. We stepped into this community looking to simplify our

is that rarely does anyone watch television alone. Everyone does naturally need alone time in a community setting and occasionally that means watching a Hulu show in the privacy of one's own room, but for the most part, whenever we take in some television, we do so together. There is a link between media and isolation and in subtle ways we are trying to fight that. Once a week a few of us go to a friend's apartment to eat dessert and watch *LOST*. Some Friday nights as our house event we'll watch *Good Eats*

Nightmare

Continued from page 1

be trifled with. As the series went on, that evil was lost in the translation. Craven came back to reset it to what he intended when he wrote and directed the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street*.

But reset it to what? What is it about the original *Nightmare* that rings true to fans? There was inventive death with buckets of blood, but that only happened four times. That's right. The body count in the original was only four. And as far as Freddy's outrageous personality goes, re-watch the original. The rim shot one-liners aren't there. Those happened later on in the sequels when other directors and writers took control. Craven brought a new angle to the teen-horror genre with the element of dreams but he didn't create the comedic element of Freddy that the sequels did. What exactly did he create that makes the Elm Street story so good? I think it comes down to a very simple tale of good versus evil, through the eye of someone who had studied it and was a by-product of the early 20th century's drift away from the supernatural. Before you think I've gone and deconstructed and psychoanalyzed your favorite childhood horror movie, let me explain.

Wes Craven grew up in 1940s/50s Cleveland, in a midwest, Baptist family. He did his undergrad work at Wheaton College, a bastion of conservative Christian thought, where he has copped to issues abiding by the "rules" Wheaton enforced upon the student body. He went on to get a master's degree in philosophy from Johns Hopkins, but his worldview had already been heavily influenced by his religious upbringing in a time when rational thinking ignored the supernatural in favor of the proof and security of science. Craven never felt comfortable with that rationality of modernity. His films often explore the line between what is reality and what is not. *A Nightmare On Elm Street* was a perfect example, bringing

the life of our dreams into reality and vice versa. Part of his inspiration for writing the film was reading an article about Cambodian refugees that died in their sleep after having nightmares. Had the atrocities, stress and evil they experienced caused this?

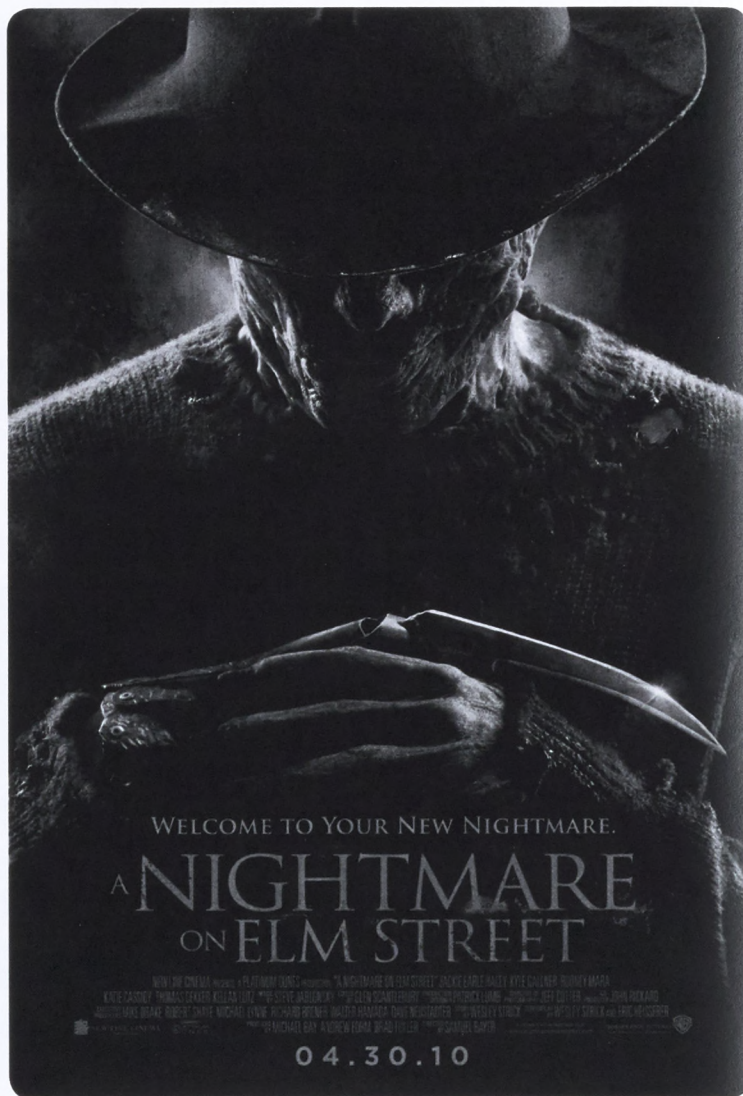
Craven was exposed to the ultimate battle of good versus evil in his Christian upbringing. It doesn't get any larger in scope than God and Satan fighting over the souls of humanity. Enter the embodiment of evil as envisioned by Wes Craven: Fred Krueger.

In Craven's conception, the teenagers of Springwood, Ohio, are terrorized by the embodied evil of Fred Krueger in their dreams. This evil, presumed eliminated by their parents (who in a sense have just tried to ignore Fred's effect on the town), is instead very much alive within the dreams of their children. The parents might have put Fred out of sight, but certainly not out of mind. Evil is not a rational thing.

It bears mentioning that this storyline is ripe with: 1) parallels to modernity's ignoring the supernatural and thus falling prey to it, and 2) modernity's children born into post-modernity exploring and embracing

the supernatural in whatever real forms they encounter.

The battle between Fred and the parents for the lives of the children does not end with the death of Fred Krueger. Fred Krueger represents something much bigger than the man himself. He is the devil in your dreams, unrelenting in his desire to take your soul. Instinctually, we can all relate to that. We may live in the real world, but are sensitive to the supernatural world all around us. Evil is relentless and will never stop trying to get to us. Our dreams are a conduit, giving us the opportunity to release our sensitivities to this realm. We may not be open to this all the time, but we know when we feel like something is making the hairs on our neck stand on end. This is an intrigu-



ing and mysterious concept and explains why it makes for a good film.

So there's my theory as to why the story works and even as a horror story. On top of that, as I have explored "Perspectives on Christ and Culture" this quarter under the tutelage of our beloved President Mouw, I am struck by the unintentional, but seemingly neo-Calvinistic contribution to culture that Wes Craven has made with *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. The story contains serious spiritual implications worth considering, as I've detailed, beyond the gore and sadistic indulgence that the franchise became. Mr. Craven had rejected organized religion, but saw the benefit of warning us all of the evil that still seeks us out and desires nothing less than our souls.

That said, does the rehash deliver the same relatable story?

As an idea, yes. At the time I type this, the estimated opening weekend tally is about \$32 million. However, reviews have been generally negative on Rotten Tomatoes and Cinema Score gave it a C+. One of the predominant gripes with the new film, other than it doesn't add much as a remake, is that the exploration of Fred Krueger as a child molester is repelling to the audience. Interestingly enough, this was Craven's intent in the original, but the studio made him change it. It certainly explains more of the motivation and nature

of Fred Krueger, but for fans of the series that embrace Freddy as a pop-cultural icon more than as a villain and embodiment of evil, it's kind of gross. I have the same theory about stories like *Closer*. It's a brilliant play that makes great points, but it did horribly at the box office, because it makes people uncomfortable. So in concept, Freddy the molester works, but in reality, people aren't ready for this popular villain to really be villainous.

The film succeeded in upgrading the acting. The original has nostalgic value and an original concept, but believable performances? Not so much. At the same time, there's not really a chance to get to know the teenagers in the remake. The most developed and likable character ****SPOILER ALERT**** ends up being the second death, and from that point on the story concentrates on Fred's background, which appears to be turning people off.

Jackie Earl Haley is grounded in the Fred role, but that may just be because he played a similar version of this character in *Little Children*. I personally like the change. Robert Englund's version eventually became a clown with a burnt face, and even in the first film Freddy comes off as a bit of an uncoordinated klutz. That element comes off lazy and is an apparent break from the supernatural realm that Freddy belongs to.

Overall, I like that the remake didn't up the gore and stayed faithful to the mythology of Craven's original, but I don't know that the film needed to be remade. The memorable scenes were duplicated, but the scare factor was missing. If it was made to relate to a new audience, I think it will do that, though as I mentioned before, initial reactions to the reality of evil (admitting that Fred is a pedophile) incarnate have been less than favorable. People got used to the idea of Freddy as a villain to cheer for, and are uncomfortable being confronted

by the reality of his genuine evil that is shown by his pedophilia.

The new film is subtler in its imagery (Nancy doesn't cling to a crucifix in multiple scenes, she's just given a cross necklace to protect her) and upgrades the acting. Otherwise, it's still creepy, but more thriller creepy than horror creepy. This might creep out the fans of the original, because no one likes their nostalgic-childhood memories screwed with. So while the remake of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* still deals with good versus evil fighting for our souls in the realm of our dreams, I think it will fail to please original *Nightmare* fans and others that got used to the wink-and-a-smile Freddy who titillated the blood-lusting 11 year-old inside us all, trying to win our allegiance. Those types will struggle with the idea of the evil Fred who just wants to take your soul. **S**

Jason Grasl (MAT '10) recommends the Black Truffle Ravioli at the Beckham Grill happy hour.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Ministry Enrichment Seminars from Field Education

Contact: Daniel Long
626.584.5387, fielded@fuller.edu

Congregations as Emotional Systems: Implications for Pastors and their Families

Dr. Cameron Lee

Tuesday, May 25

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 220, 2nd floor, 490 E Walnut

Congregations are made up of imperfect people.

Pastors need to anticipate some of the emotional dynamics of the congregations they will serve.

This seminar explores psychological and sociological perspectives on congregational life, with a special emphasis on the demands experienced by the pastor's families.



The Right Kind of Boundaries in Marriage and Ministry

BY SHARON HARGRAVE

Boundaries in marriage. Boundaries in ministry. What does it mean? I ask that question in my work helping couples prepare their marriages for ministry and I tend to get the same answers each time.

People respond with comments like, "It means saying no," or, "It is important in protecting myself from burnout," or, "Boundaries means putting my family first".

I would agree that good boundaries help with self care and care for the family. However, it is important to note that good boundaries means much more than saying "no." Good boundaries are about the person setting them, but they are also about others who are impacted by those boundaries. Boundaries are about healthy relationships.

I am a Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT), so when I consider the concepts of boundaries in ministry and marriage, I also think about the work in my field that defines what a healthy boundary looks like. Healthy boundaries for an individual or a family create a sense of being separate from others and yet also result in a sense of belonging to a larger group. This is healthy; unhealthy boundaries also exist.

Some people or families have what MFTs call rigid boundaries. Rigid boundaries are not flexible. Nothing gets in or out of the boundary. Rules are rules and no exceptions are made. People who live in families with rigid boundaries feel alone and uncared for, and get angry easily. On the other end of the spectrum, some

families have boundaries that are called diffuse boundaries. These boundaries are all about flexibility. Anything can flow in and out of the family and rules make no difference. Decisions are made on emotion. Diffuse boundaries make people feel smothered, dependent and entitled.

The healthy family has clear boundaries. They are permeable but fixed. Clear boundaries are guidelines that take each person and situation into consideration. Clear boundaries make decisions both on fact and emotion. Clear boundaries make people feel empowered, supported and loved.

What does this have to do

with marriage and ministry? If, as married people, couples have rigid boundaries and demand that things be done a certain way, other people don't feel much a part of their lives. Even spouses can feel alone in marriage. They can also feel devalued by their spouse. This is my concern about rigid boundaries in ministry as well. If personal boundaries, or the boundaries

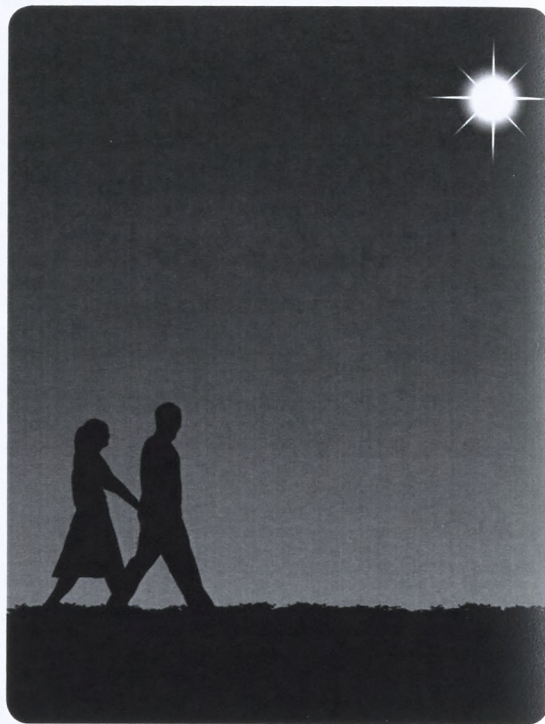
around marriage, are too rigid, people lose out on learning how to interact with each other or other people in such a way that is healthy for both

sides of the relationship.

If boundaries are too diffuse or too flexible, spouses can become overly involved or overly dependent. If one spouse consistently ignores the boundary of the other, the other spouse begins to feel powerless and unable to make decisions or solve problems. If the spouse or couple have no boundaries, they lose a sense of who they are. This is also true in ministry. If people are made to feel like the minister always needs to be around, always has to give his or her stamp of approval, or is the only one who can make decisions, they become dependent and incapable of operating on their own. They fail to learn to think and act for themselves in ministry.

Boundaries in ministry involve far more than the minister and his or her family. They also involve and affect the people involved in the ministry. What is exciting about this concept is that there are no answers set in

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“Boundaries are not just about safety and protection. Boundaries are about healthy relationships and healthy living. Couples with rigid boundaries miss opportunities to learn and grow. Couples with diffuse boundaries have a hard time determining direction and meaning.”

Boundaries

Continued from page 6

concrete. Each decision a minister and his or her spouse makes takes discernment, conversation and coming together to decide what God has called them to do. It is an active way to keep listening to God to hear his voice.

Consider date night as an example. Suppose a couple has set aside Friday nights for date night. One Friday night the church plans a work project to take food to some families in need. The rigid couple would never consider going as they have determined that they do not change their plans on Friday night. They always do something just for them. The diffuse couple almost never has date night because they let many other things get in the way and unfortunately never benefit from spending time together. The couple with clear boundaries talks about the option of spending just this one night together working on a proj-



ect for families in need and come to a mutual decision about what to do.

Boundaries are not just about safety and protection. Boundaries are about healthy relationships and healthy living. Couples with rigid

boundaries miss opportunities to learn and grow. Couples with diffuse boundaries have a hard time determining direction and meaning. Couples with clear boundaries give opportunity for growth and also have a sense of direction. They make great leaders and develop strong, independent followers.

The Church is in need of couples with healthy boundaries. She is not in need of couples in ministry who overwork themselves and burn out or couples who have learned that the only way to protect themselves is to say "no." Couples in leadership with healthy boundaries create healthy congregations, healthy families and healthy individuals. **S**

Sharon Hargrave, MFT, hopes, if you're married, you will talk with your spouse about your boundaries to ensure they are healthy.



Television

Continued from page 3

we're still human and sometimes need some life-giving, de-stressing episodes of *House* or *Supernatural*.

This has meant that when people

are talking about the latest *SNL* episode or reality-show cast off, we can't relate. But chances are we've played a great game of ultimate Frisbee or

been on a beautiful hike in the past few days. We've probably made it to a nearby screening of an interesting global documentary or had a great conversation over some beer or tea in our living room with our latest couch surfer. An additional benefit is that each month we have a little more money to use on a need in our community rather than on our cable bill. So I would love for all of you to know that if God moves you away from cable television, you're not alone. And if you still watch television sometimes, you're not alone in that either. We recommend finding a Christian community to challenge you and surround you wherever you're at and whatever your convictions about television may be. **S**

Jen Prickett (3rd yr., MDiv) and her community would like to invite you over to watch television. Or maybe just have a conversation.



ANNOUNCEMENT

NEW STUDENT
Orientation

NOW TAKING
APPLICATIONS

FULLER HAPPENINGS

RABBI-PASTOR DIALOGUE Fuller will be hosting a Rabbi-Pastor Dialogue entitled "Christian and Jewish Views of Israel" on *Tuesday, June 8, 2010 from 11:30a.m.-1:30p.m. in Payton 101* as part of an ongoing series jointly sponsored by Fuller Seminary and the Board of Rabbis of Southern California. This event will include Fuller President Richard J. Mouw and Rabbi Mark S. Diamond as speakers. Attendance is limited, so an RSVP is required. Please contact Tiffany at 626.584.5319 or tiffanytao@fuller.edu for more information or to RSVP.

IS YOUR MARRIAGE READY FOR MINISTRY Strong Marriages/ Successful Ministries helps Fuller students prepare their marriages for ministry. Sign up for the Fall groups begins now. Two general groups will be offered on Monday afternoon from 4:00p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on Monday night from 7:00p.m. to 8:30p.m. A group for Asian or Asian/American students will be on Tuesday night from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The groups will be led by Sharon Hargrave, a licensed marriage and family therapist and an employee of SOP. For more info, contact Sharon Hargrave at 626.529.5400 or sashargrave@aol.com.

STUDENT AWARDS CONVOCATION The annual Student Awards Convocation will be held *10-11 a.m. on Thursday, May 27 in the First Congregational Church*. The entire Fuller community is invited to come and join us in congratulating the award recipients. For more information, contact the Provost's Office at 626.584.5212 or prov-acadsystems@fuller.edu.

IS YOUR HUSBAND A STUDENT AT FULLER? All student wives are invited to join SUPPORT, the Bible study, prayer and fellowship group just for you!

SUPPORT has two distinct meeting times: *Wednesday Mornings, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Pasadena Presbyterian Church, 3rd floor.* (Corner of Colorado Blvd. and Madison Ave.) Childcare is provided for children 0-5 years. *Thursday Evenings, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Chang Commons.* Fuller housing complex on N. Madison. Theme Room 2. (Enter from the Oakland side, through the tot lot.) No childcare provided. For more information contact: Heather Henry at 415.497.9194. heatherhenry44@yahoo.com.

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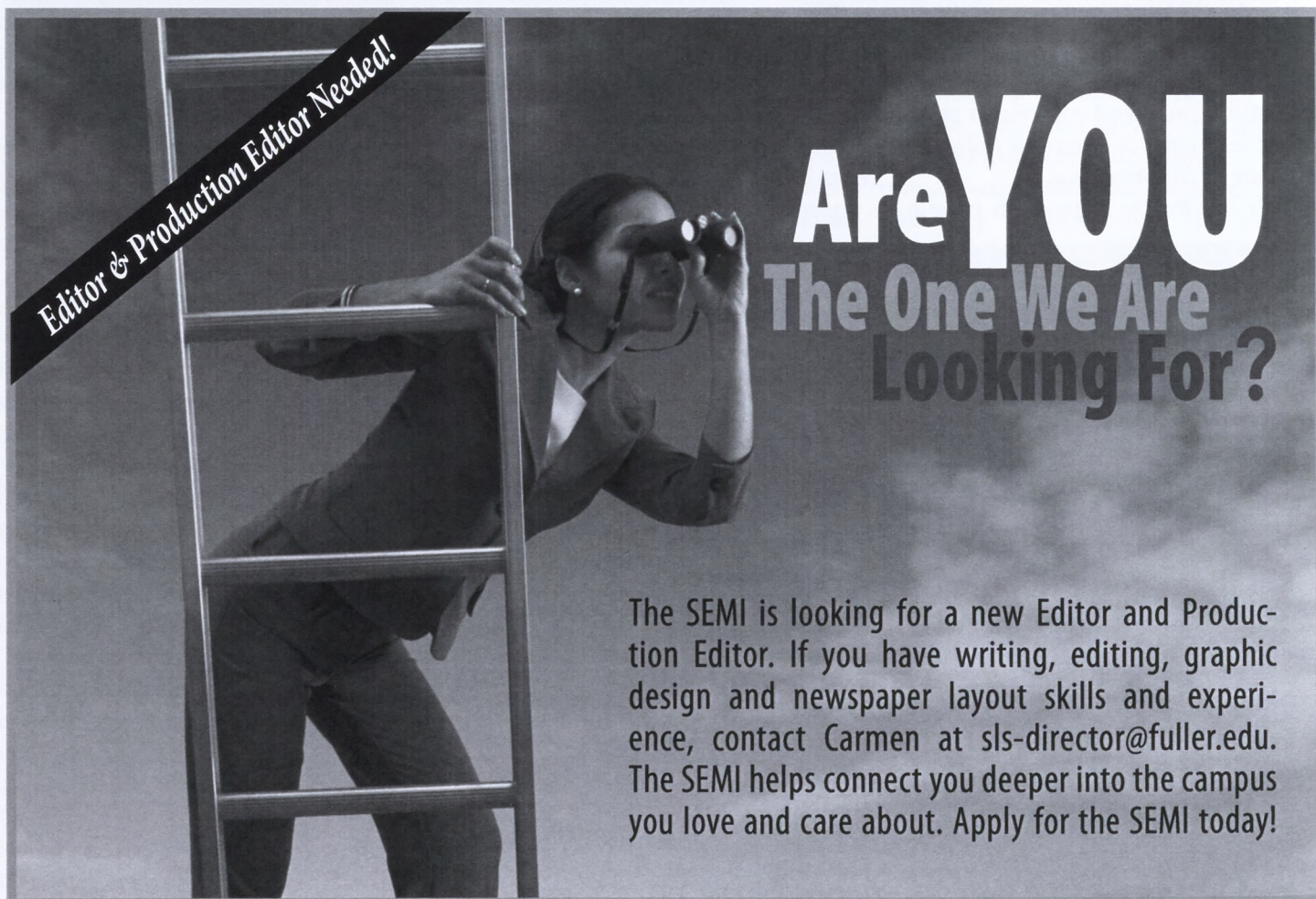
and Culture Magazine" from the Fuller Bookstore or Student Life & Services (2nd floor of the Catalyst).

TICKETS TO AMUSEMENT PARKS Student Life and Services sells tickets to Disneyland, Legoland (\$62) and Universal Studios (2 days, \$50). Come by the office on the 2nd floor of the Catalyst or call 584.5435.

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION CREW NEEDED Help Fuller welcome new students this coming year! The 2010-2011 Orientation Crew is a fun, temporary/seasonal paid position. Mandatory training dates throughout the Summer. Spaces are limited. Contact Matthew Talley, Orientation Coordinator, in Student Life & Services at sls-office@fuller.edu or 626.584.5435 for more information & an application. Apps due June 2. Interviews will be completed this quarter.

CHINESE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP (CSF) *10a.m.-11a.m., Tuesdays in the International Students Concerns Committee Room (above the ISO Food Bank garage, behind Taylor Hall.)* For more info, contact Effie Kwok at effie.kwok@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENT



Are YOU
The One We Are
Looking For?

The SEMI is looking for a new Editor and Production Editor. If you have writing, editing, graphic design and newspaper layout skills and experience, contact Carmen at sls-director@fuller.edu. The SEMI helps connect you deeper into the campus you love and care about. Apply for the SEMI today!